

Dept. of Aesthetics and Philosophy

School of Interdisciplinary Studies

EFL- University, Hyderabad

Course Title	An Introduction to Buddhist Philosophy
Course Code	APH 245
Semester	II (March-July 2023)
No. of Credits	5
Timings	Tuesday & Thursday 11 am to 1 pm
Name of the Faculty Members(s)	Dr. Santosh Raut
Course Description: 150/200 words	<p>When people first encounter philosophy, they want to know what it is about. Other disciplines have their own subject matter: biology is the study of life processes, sociology is the study of human societies, astronomy looks at planets and stars, etc. So what is philosophy about? Those who are not new to the study of philosophy know that what makes philosophy a separate discipline is not its special subject matter. There are questions that we naturally think of as 'philosophical' in some sense. Questions such as, 'How should I live my life?', and 'How do we know anything?', and 'How did all this come to be?'. But the first question is also addressed by literature, the second by cognitive science, and the third by astrophysics. What distinguishes philosophy from other disciplines?</p> <p>The answer has more to do with method than with content. What sets philosophy apart as a discipline is more its concern with how to answer questions than with the answers themselves. To study philosophy is to learn to think carefully and critically about complex issues. It is not necessarily to learn 'the answers' that the discipline has arrived at. This can make the study of philosophy frustrating for some. When we first study a subject, we expect to learn the body of knowledge that has been developed by that discipline. The study of philosophy is not like other discipline.</p> <p>Buddhism was undoubtedly one of the very sophisticated</p>

exploration of ancient philosophical thought and was a departure from already established philosophical system of its time, in ancient world. Out of dissatisfaction with the received view of how people should live their lives, there arose efforts at thinking systematically about these matters. But in both cases these inquiries soon led to major developments in metaphysics, epistemology, ethics and soteriology. For philosophers became aware that if we are to determine how we ought to live, we need to be clearer about the nature of the world and our place in it. And this in turn requires greater clarity about what constitutes knowledge and what processes lead to it.

While many people might lack detailed knowledge about what it is that Buddhists believe and what Buddhist practice involves, surely everyone knows that Buddhism is the religion that was founded in ancient India by the Buddha, subsequently spread throughout Asia, and is now attracting adherents in the West. Well, yes, but there's a load of mischief lurking in that word '*religion*'. There is one sense in which Buddhism can accurately be called a religion, but there is another widely used sense of that word in which it would be a mistake. And clarity about this matter will prove just as crucial to our undertaking as will being clear about what philosophy is.

Buddhist Philosophy, then, is the systematic investigation of questions in ethics, metaphysics, epistemology, aesthetics and soteriology (and several related fields). It involves using analysis and argumentation in systematic and reflective ways. This will do, at least for now, as an account of what we will mean by an introduction to Buddhist philosophy.

Thus, the course tries to explore related philosophical concepts and issues in the light of Buddhist thought.

#### Readings:

1. Bhikkhu Bodhi (Tr), *The All-Embracing Net of the Views: Brahmajala Sutta and its Commentaries*, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, Sri Lanka, 1978
2. Bhikkhu Bodhi, *The Great Discourse on Causation*, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, Sri Lanka, 1995.
3. A.A. Bennett, *The Long Discourse of the Buddha (Digha Nikaya)*, Chetana Ltd. Bombay, 1980.
4. E.M. Hare, F.L. Woodward (tr.), *The Book of the Gradual Sayings, Anguttara Nikaya*, Motilal

	<p>Banarasidas, Delhi, 2006</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. I.B. Horner, <i>The Middle Length Sayings</i>, (Majjim Nikaya), Pali Text Society, London, 1967.</li> <li>6. B. R. Ambedkar, <i>The Buddha and His Dhamma</i>, Buddha Bhoomi Prakashan, Nagpur, 1980.</li> <li>7. Rhys Davis, <i>The Birth of Indian Psychology and Its Development in Buddhism</i>, Oriental Books, Reprint Corporation, New Delhi, 1978</li> <li>8. Herbert Guenther, <i>The Philosophy and Psychology in the Abhidhamma</i>, Motilal Banarasidas, Delhi, 1974.</li> <li>9. Bruce Mathhews, <i>Craving and Salvation: A study in Buddhic Soteriology</i>, Sri Satguru Publication, Delhi, 1994.</li> <li>10. K. Warder, <i>Indian Buddhism</i>, Motilal Banarasidas, Delhi, 1970</li> <li>11. David J. Kalupahana, <i>A History of Buddhist Philosophy</i>, University Hawai Press, Honolulu, 1933.</li> <li>12. Gombrich F. Richard, <i>Theravada Buddhism</i>, Routledge, New York, 1991.</li> <li>13. Narasu P. L., <i>Essence of Buddhism</i>, Asian Educational Services, New Delhi, 1993.</li> <li>14. Thomas A. Kochumuttom, <i>A Buddhist Doctrine of Experince (A New Translation and Interpretation of the works of Vasubandhu the Yogacarini)</i>, Motilal Banarasidas, Delhi, 1982.</li> <li>15. Sangharakshita, <i>A Survey of Buddhism</i>, Windhorse Publication, Birmingham, UK, 2001.</li> <li>16. Sangharakshita, <i>Religion of Art</i>, Windhorse Publications, Cambridge, 1988.</li> <li>17. Gadjin, Nagao, <i>Madhyamika and Yogacara</i>, State University of New York Press, New York, 1991.</li> <li>18. Paul Williams, <i>Mahayana Buddhism</i>, Routledge, London, 1989.</li> <li>19. T.V.R. Murti, <i>The Central Philosophy of Buddhism</i>, Mandaka Books, Unwin, London, 1980.</li> </ol>
Evaluation	<p><b>40% Internal Assessment</b> (Witten Test &amp; Class Presentations), <b>60 % End-Sem Exam</b> (Written Exam)</p>